

Sanctuary Ecologically Significant Areas (SESAs)

Quick Look Reports

Introduction

As part of an ecosystem based management approach, thirteen Sanctuary Ecologically Significant Areas (SESAs) have been identified within Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary (MBNMS; <http://montereybay.noaa.gov/resourcepro/ebmi/sesa.html>). These special areas encompass remarkable, representative and/or sensitive marine habitats, communities and ecological processes. They will be focal areas for facilitating research to better understand natural and human-caused variation, as well as for resource protection.

SESAs will support the following management needs:

1. Detailed information on focal areas improves our ability to adaptively manage these important resources, and serve as test cases for other areas within MBNMS. This information also prepares staff for engaging on upcoming management processes such as the NMFS 5-yr Review of Groundfish Essential Fish Habitat, as well as anticipating future potential issues including offshore energy development, offshore aquaculture, oil spills, shipping lanes, noise or climate change.
2. Targeting research and monitoring efforts in focal areas and coordinating with the scientific community. Findings from focal areas may be extrapolated to other areas within MBNMS, guiding future management decisions and policy.
3. Applied spatial management tools (such as SESAs) are needed to effectively measure and evaluate protection levels in high value habitat in preparation for upcoming management plan review processes.

Available data for each SESA have been summarized into Quick Look Reports, which include site descriptions, resource management issues, living marine resources, historic and ongoing research and monitoring, science needs, maps, imagery, and selected publications. The purpose of these Quick Look Reports is to provide summary information to our potential partners and organizations, particularly in the research community, with which MBNMS can collaborate to address information needs.